



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
United States Department of Agriculture • Washington, DC 20250
Ag Statistics Hotline: 1-800-727-9540 • www.usda.gov/nass/



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NATION'S 2002 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE REPORT FORMS DUE FEBRUARY 3

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15, 2003 - Farmers and ranchers are reminded that the deadline for returning their 2002 Census of Agriculture report form is Feb. 3, 2003. A large number of report forms have been completed and returned, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the agency responsible for conducting and producing results from the census of agriculture.

For those who have not completed their report form yet, estimates are acceptable if records are not available. Those not operating a farm or ranch who have received a census of agriculture form should return it so they will not be contacted again.

Operators who have not returned their form should be aware that response to the census is required by law (Title 7, U.S. Code). Delays increase the cost of the census and cause further mail and personal follow-ups.

Help completing the census report form is only a free phone call away at 1-888-4AG-STAT. Those with questions about completing the form, or who did not receive a form by February but believe they qualify as a farm or ranch, can call the toll-free number.

All information collected in the census of agriculture is kept strictly confidential by law. This 26th census will provide a detailed picture of the current status of agriculture, across the Nation's 3,000 plus counties, and changes since the last census was taken five years ago. Results from previous censuses and hundreds of current agricultural statistics may be found at www.usda.gov/nass/. By responding to the census, America's farmers and ranchers **make it known – agriculture counts!**

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For background information and sample 2002 Census report forms, and for data from the last Census, visit www.nass.usda.gov/census/. Public service announcements, news releases, editorials and similar materials may be found by clicking on "Help Us Promote the 2002 Census" or by calling 1-800-727-9540 or by contacting your local State Statistical Office at www.usda.gov/nass/ under "State Information."

Find agricultural statistics for your county, State, and the Nation at www.usda.gov/nass/.